



Thrift Savings Plan BULLETIN

for Service TSP Representatives

Subject: Thrift Savings Plan Open Season Information — April 15 through June 30, 2005

Date: March 23, 2005

The next and final Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season begins April 15 and ends June 30, 2005. During this open season, service members may elect to contribute to the TSP up to 10% of the basic pay they earn each pay period. If they elect to contribute from basic pay, they may also elect to contribute from incentive pay or special pay (including bonuses).

Beginning July 1, 2005, open seasons will be eliminated and participants may make contribution elections at any time. For more information about this change, see TSP Bulletin 05-U-2, Participation in the Thrift Savings Plan, dated January 26, 2005.

I. Open Season Materials

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (Board) has developed the materials described below to publicize this open season.

A. Open Season Leaflet

The leaflet “Be a buddy” replaces the leaflet for the last open season. The leaflet does not have a stock number. The Board will send a supply of the leaflets to the central distribution points of those services that have requested a paper distribution.

B. Poster

The poster “Be a buddy” replaces the poster that was issued for the last open season. The poster does not have a stock number, but it shows the open season dates. The Board will send a supply of the posters to all central distribution points.

(continued on next page)

Inquiries: Questions concerning this bulletin should be directed to the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board at **(202) 942-1460**.

Chapter: This bulletin may be filed in Chapter 5, Open Season.

Supersedes: This bulletin supersedes TSP Bulletin 04-U-14, Thrift Savings Plan Open Season Information — October 15 through December 31, 2004, dated September 17, 2004.

II. Service Responsibilities

A. Disseminate open season materials

Services should distribute the leaflet to all uniformed service members. This distribution may be electronic or physical. The leaflet attached to this bulletin is in PDF format so that services may distribute it electronically. Services should display the poster in highly visible areas, such as service bulletin boards, elevators, cafeterias, hallways, and lounges.

Services should also provide the TSP Election Form to service members upon request. They may use the printed version of the form dated August 2002 or they may use the most recent version of the form on the TSP Web site. Authorized service representatives may also order additional copies of the form from the TSP.

B. Other responsibilities

For a description of other actions services must take during the open season, see TSP Bulletin 02-U-38, Thrift Savings Plan Open Seasons, dated September 18, 2002. That bulletin contains more information about open seasons and includes a sample memorandum that services may use to announce the open season.

As discussed in TSP Bulletin 05-U-2, TSP Bulletin 02-U-38 will be superseded July 1, 2005. A sample memorandum that services may use to inform members who join the service after June 30, 2005, about the TSP is attached to TSP Bulletin 05-U-2.



PAMELA-JEANNE MORAN
Director
Office of Benefits Services

Attachment: Open Season Leaflet, "Be a Buddy"

TSP Open Season

April 15–June 30, 2005

Be a
buddy
Tell a
buddy

Members of the
Uniformed Services

The **Thrift Savings Plan** is a voluntary retirement savings and investment plan. The money you save and earn through your TSP account will provide you with an important source of retirement income. A major advantage of the TSP is that contributions and earnings are tax-deferred — you pay no taxes until you withdraw from your account.

TSP open season gives you the chance to start or change the amount of your contributions. Elections made this open season will be effective no earlier than the first full pay period in June. **Beginning July 1, 2005**, open seasons will be eliminated and you will be able to change your election at any time.

Ask your service TSP representative for Form TSP-U-1 or download a copy from the TSP Web site, www.tsp.gov. Your contributions will be made automatically from your pay each month. **Please note:** Some services process these elections electronically instead of using paper forms. Check with your service TSP representative for guidance.

In 2005, you can elect to contribute up to 10% of your basic pay each month. If you elect to contribute from basic pay, you may also elect to contribute up to 100% of incentive pay and special pay (including bonus pay) that you receive, but your total contributions from taxable pay for the year may not exceed the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) limit (\$14,000 for 2005).

Contributions from pay earned in a combat zone, which are tax-exempt, are not included in this limit, but they count toward another IRS limit which specifies that the combined total of tax-deferred and tax-exempt TSP contributions cannot exceed the lesser of 100% of compensation or \$42,000 in 2005. If you also contribute to a civilian TSP account, total contributions to both your accounts cannot exceed that limit.

You can choose among five investment funds:

- **Government Securities Investment (G) Fund** — invested in short-term, risk-free U.S. Treasury securities that are specially issued to the TSP
- **Fixed Income Index Investment (F) Fund** — invested in a bond index fund that tracks the Lehman Brothers U.S. Aggregate (LBA) bond index
- **Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500 stock index (large companies)
- **Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment (S) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Dow Jones Wilshire 4500 Completion stock index (small and medium companies)
- **International Stock Index Investment (I) Fund** — invested in a stock index fund that tracks the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australasia, Far East) stock index (stocks in 21 developed countries)

There is no guarantee that future rates of return will be the same as historical rates. There is risk of investment loss in the F, C, S, and I Funds.

You can get the most recent share prices and rates of return by visiting the TSP Web site or by calling the ThriftLine.

If you are a new participant, your contributions are automatically invested in the G Fund. Once your account has been established, make an investment allocation to put your contributions in the funds of your choice.

The annual rates of return (net earnings after expenses) for the G, F, C, S, and I Funds are shown below.

Year	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund
1995	7.0%	18.3%	37.4%
1996	6.8%	3.7%	22.8%
1997	6.8%	9.6%	33.2%
1998	5.7%	8.7%	28.4%
1999	6.0%	-0.8%	21.0%
2000	6.4%	11.7%	-9.1%
2001	5.4%	8.6%	-11.9%
2002	5.0%	10.3%	-22.0%
2003	4.1%	4.1%	28.5%
2004	4.3%	4.3%	10.8%
1995–2004 compound annual rates of return	5.7%	7.7%	12.0%

Year	S Fund*	I Fund*
1995	33.5%	11.3%
1996	17.2%	6.1%
1997	25.7%	1.5%
1998	8.6%	20.1%
1999	35.5%	26.7%
2000	-15.8%	-14.2%
2001	-9.0%	-21.9%
2002	-18.1%	-16.0%
2003	42.9%	37.9%
2004	18.0%	20.0%
1995–2004 compound annual rates of return	11.8%	5.5%

* The S and I Funds were implemented in May 2001. Through May 2004, the S Fund tracked the Wilshire 4500 stock index. Currently, the S Fund tracks the Dow Jones Wilshire 4500 Completion stock index. The I Fund tracks the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australasia, Far East) stock index. The returns shown reflect the actual performance of the S and I Funds from May 2001 forward, and the returns of the Wilshire 4500 and EAFE indexes (without deduction of any administrative expenses, trading costs, or investment management fees), respectively, for the first 4 months of 2001 and for prior years.

Open season is a good time to review your investment choices and rebalance your account to match your retirement savings goals. You can rebalance by making interfund transfers, contribution allocations, or a combination of the two.

- **Contribution allocation**—specifies the way in which all new money coming into your account (payroll contributions, loan payments, transfers and rollovers from other retirement plans) is invested in the funds. It does not affect the investment of your current balance.
- **Interfund transfer**—redistributes the money already in your account. It does not affect the investment of future contributions.

You may make your contribution allocation or interfund transfer at any time using:

- the TSP Web site (www.tsp.gov).
- the ThriftLine 1-TSP-YOU-FRST (1-877-968-3778). Until May 31, 2005, callers outside the U.S. and Canada can call 1-504-255-8777. Beginning June 1, call 1-404-233-4400 (not toll-free).
- Form TSP-U-50, Investment Allocation.

The Web site and the ThriftLine are the most efficient ways to make your investment allocation. You will need your Social Security number and your TSP Personal Identification Number (PIN) to make your request.

If you are age 50 or older, and you are contributing the maximum amount of regular TSP contributions for which you are eligible, you may elect to make additional “catch-up” contributions from your taxable basic pay up to \$4,000 for 2005.

Note for members of the Ready Reserve: If you also contribute to a TSP account as an employee of the Federal Government covered by the Federal Employees’ Retirement System (FERS), be sure that your contributions to your uniformed services account do not cause you to reach the IRS annual limit of \$14,000 before the end of the calendar year. If you do, you could lose out on matching contributions from your civilian agency.

More information about the TSP is available from your service. Ask for the *Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan*. Be sure to review the information in the Plan Summary before you make any decisions about your TSP account. Additional information (as well as the most recent forms and publications) is available from the TSP Web site.

Restrictions on withdrawing your money apply while you are a member of the uniformed services. Read the Plan Summary for details.

Address changed? If so, contact your service immediately to correct your TSP account records.